

to the Greek, in a form suited to their natures and needs.

Before the Apostles passed away there arose among these peoples a desire to have the gospel that had been preached to them embodied in permanent form, and, as a matter of history, the *Four Gospels originated in this way*.

Points to be Emphasized

There are some points that need to be summarized as of special importance.

1st. There are *Four Gospels* for the reason that Jesus was to be commended to four types or classes of men, or to be four phases of human thought, the Jewish, Roman, Greek, and Christian. There are no more because these exhaust the classes to be provided for. The world of that age must have been revolutionized and the nature of the races materially changed to admit of either more gospels than four or less than four.

2d. The very *Striking Differences* seen in the three Missionary Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and, between these three and the Christian Gospel, John, are fully explained.

3d. The force of the great mass of *Alleged Discrepancies*, as objections to the historical character of the gospels, is utterly broken by the simple consideration—essential to the true theory and based upon undoubted facts—that the productions of the Evangelists are not histories, but memoirs in a modified sense; in short, not all biographical sketches of Christ, but records of the Apostles' practical preaching of Christ as the Savior of men.

4th. The view presented explains the fitness of the gospels for the world in all ages. Those classes were representative classes for all time.

5th. The gospels may then be characterized as follows:

Matthew's is the Gospel for the Jew, the man of the divine religion and the representative of the Oriental races.

Mark's is the Gospel for the Roman, the man of power and action and law and universal empire, the practical man.

Luke's is the Gospel for the Greek, the man of intellect and culture and the representative of universal humanity.

John's is the Gospel for the Christian, the man of faith and of Christ, saved out of the world-races, Jewish, Roman, and Greek, by the power of the gospel message to sinners.

EXPOSITORY

Temptation.—A Study

There were, in Christ's life, many experiences, from which men are excluded. They do not share His steadfastness of faith, His loyalty to principle or His inviolate devotion to a divine mission, because they refuse to lift their natures to the height on which Christ lived. But Christ's mysterious temptation in the Wilderness is, in some form or other, shared by all men. For while resistance to temptation and victory over it are only partially achieved, *temptation is univer-*

sal. Nor was Christ's struggle with temptation in the Wilderness and His complete victory over it a mere allegory, and though we cannot determine in what manner the temptation came to Him in that critical period when He was coming into the consciousness of His nature and divine mission in the world, there can be no doubt that both His temptation and His struggle with it were intensely real and powerful, and that Christ, for man's sake, met and conquered the Tempter, to utmost strength.

There must have been some attraction for Christ in the things presented to Him by the Tempter, else there would have been no real force and hence no virtue in His resistance by which He defeated the Tempter and rendered the temptations powerless. Were Christ's temptation a mere deceptive phantasmagoria, the narrative can be no profit to us. What comfort is there for us in temptation, to know that Christ also was tempted, fought the Tempter vigorously, but without real danger;—not only came out from the struggle with temptation uninjured, but without even the possibility of a wound. To hold that Christ could not have fallen, that His temptation and struggle with it were not real is to be robbed, and to rob others, of One, who, "though He were a son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered," and to be deceived in the belief that Christ is a High-priest who can be touched with a feeling of man's need, "being tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." To so hold not only robs the world of a *living Christ*, very man no less than very God, but places in His stead a Christ alike incapable of kindling devotion or inspiring love.

Christ was tempted as a *man*. As He was man as well as God, He possessed the same propensities and was subject to the same conflicts as man. The point of difference between Him and man, is, that he never yielded. Heb. 4:15. He felt the power of temptation and conquered only after a severe struggle analogous to our own struggles.

The nature of temptation is also indicated in the account of Christ's temptation in the Wilderness. It does not necessarily involve sin or even moral imperfection, but carries with it the possibility of sin. We sin only when we yield. Sin and temptation thus are very far apart. Shakers who knew very well the human heart knew this. In "Measure for Measure" he says, "'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus. Another thing to fall."

St. Augustine says: It is the Devil's part to suggest and ours not to consent; "and St. Gregory says: "Sin is first by suggestion, then by delight and lastly by consent. (cf. Achan's sin and confession, I saw, I coveted, I took.) But where is the point at which sin begins, or where temptation becomes sin? It is that point where the evil suggestion in the temptation makes a determining impression upon the heart.

SERMONS IN QUAIN TEXTS

BY THE EDITOR

Text: Two blind men followed him.—Matt. 9:27.

How could blind men follow Jesus? They followed him not in the sense of being his disciples, for those who follow him aright are no longer blind, but these men walked after him. How could they being blind? Probably they were led or guided, and if so we need to learn the lesson. For leading blind people to Jesus is the great work of the Christian church. Too many, however, of the leaders are blind themselves and it is a very awkward leading they do. Indeed the world is full of blind people. There are some things they can see, such as mountains, plains and the blue sky, money, real estate, railroads, steamboats, lands and houses, and many other things, but the best, the most glorious things of life they can not see for they are blind, and until they call on Jesus to have mercy on their poor souls they will continue to wander their way blindly thro the world. Jesus alone can open the eyes of the spiritual blind, and he stands ready to do just that very thing for the mere asking. Why then should anyone remain blind? Because they do not want to see. Seeing would mean new responsibilities, new duties, new obligations, and rather than bear these multitudes will "go it blind." Men do not want to see the world's need, the world's suffering, the world's misery, it might appeal to their sympathy and in an unguarded moment open their pocketbooks and contribute what in their sober moments they would regret. Thus it is that so many are blind, and willfully blind, the worst of all blindness.

Text: This month shall be unto you the beginning of months.—Ex. 12:2.

Why so? Because it marked the beginning of their new life, the life of freedom. They had been in bondage, now they are free. They have now started on the career of real living. Before they merely existed. Such a time has each one that is born of God. When Christ comes into the human heart and the Spirit of God takes possession of us and we possession of him, it means the beginning of a new era in one's life, in fact it means the beginning of real living. No one lives as he ought to live until he has thrown off the chains of sin and become free in Christ Jesus. All the time he has lived up to the day when he is born again is life spent in Egypt making bricks for the enemy, and is therefore worse than wasted. A man's real life begins, when he is born, not the first time, but when he is born the second time. There are men who have been in the world fifty years and yet are but six months old. Others have not yet commenced to live. The Christian's birthday is the day of his new birth or his birth from above. Reader, have you been born again? Do not waste any more time in Egyptian bondage, you are serving the enemy for naught, wearing away your best years in servitude. Let Christ make you free.